nental India south to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Besides the abovementioned records of stragglers, the starling is not known to winter in southern India.

On October 24, 1965, while out birding some 7-8 miles north-east of Bangalore, I saw a huge flock of about 300-350 myna-like birds in a harvested field adjoining an extensive patch of short open scrub. One specimen was shot out of this flock and later identified as *S. vulgaris*, most probably of the race *poltaratskyi*. The remarkable thing about this record is the large number seen as opposed to single or at the most 12 birds recorded previously as stragglers.

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6. TREE SPARROW *PASSER MONTANUS* (L.) IN THE EASTERN GHATS

During the banding session of the B.N.H.S. bird migration study project at Lammasinghi in the Visakhapatnam section of the Eastern Ghats in April-May year 1972, we obtained a few specimens of the Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (Linn.).

This is an interesting record as the distribution of the species according to the SYNOPSIS and FAUNA is northern parts of India along the Himalayan ranges east to Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and south to Assam and Manipur etc.

The present record is the first from the E. ghats and adds northern Andhra to its known range.

The population of tree sparrows at Lammasinghi is more or less localised and the male specimen we preserved for record was in breeding condition as evinced by the enlarged gonads. Two species of

sparrows (*Passer domesticus* and *P. montanus*) co-exist at Lammasinghi and it is desirable to study their ecology.

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7.   FOOD AND FEEDING HABITS OF THE TOAD, *BUFO MELANOSTICTUS* SCHNEIDER (AMPHIBIA : BUFONIDAE)

In India practically no attempt has been made to study the feeding habits of the common toads, excepting for a stray record of Rai *et al.* (1969) of the adults of the white grub, *Holotrichia consanguinea* Blanch. being fed upon by the common Indian toad, *Bufo melanostictus*.   Prasad (1961), while reviewing the natural enemies of the sugarcane white grubs, indicated the beneficial effect of introduction of the Surinam toad, *Bufo marinus*, into Puerto Rico and Hawaii in the control of scarabaeids.

The present study involed examination of the stomach contents of 362 individuals of the common Indian toad, *Bufo melanostictus* Schneider carried over a period of 14 months during 1968-1970.   The toads were collected during the evenings almost every fortnight during the period in various agricultural fields and near lamp posts around Dharwar, Mysore State.   The toads thus collected the previous evening were sexed and dissected, the stomachs were cut out and preserved separately in 10 per cent formaldehyde for future examination of the contents.   The stomachs thus preserved were slit open, the contents were taken out and identified taking care to see that the number of individual insects and other animals was correctly recorded.   The data are summarised groupwise in Table 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Toads in general are well known to feed on different groups of animals of which insects constitute the major bulk.   In the present study also insects were recovered from stomachs and constituted 99 per cent of the total number of various animals consumed.   Two other